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A

REVIEW OF THE STATE OF THE BRITISH NATION.

Thursday, October 28. 1708.

I have given you several *Reviews* about the Siege of *Lille*; the surprizing Defence of the Garrison has had but too many Consequences upon us, which discover much of our Temper, both National and Personal, respecting People and Parties; I know nothing more natural to this Age, than as soon as any thing does not please them, to fall foul upon Instruments; and since every Body does so, I know not why my *Mad Man* and I should not have the same Priviledge; and therefore, good People, pray will you come and let us examine, whose Backside is blackest, and what are the true Grounds and Reasons, why *Lille* was not taken, as other Towns us'd to be taken? And if this Enquiry pinches somebody that does not look

for it, let them blame themselves.—I have done preaching Divinity to you; to talk of Prayer and Fasting to you, is to talk Gospel to a Kettle Drum.—Tho' at the same time I know not what to say to the Praying French; let them pray how they will, I never find them fail to their Prayers, but they are too hard for us presently after it.—I have taken Notice of it sometimes, and may again.—But that by the way. Let us come back to the Siege of *Lille*.—When we sat down before it, what Asurances did we give our selves of taking it in 12 or 14 Days open Trenches? What Confidence were we in of the Circumstances? So many Days for the City, and so many for the Citadel.—And to examine the particular Days, I need but send you

you to your Wager-Offices, where our City Politicians throw the Dice upon the great Actions of the World — There let them tell us, how much Money was given on 20 Days, and 25 Days, and 30 Days of this Siege. I will not examine which was *Whigs* Money, and which was *Tory* Money; but if I should be ask'd which was Fools Money, and which was Knaves Money, perhaps it might be much easier to be distinguish'd — And now you are all blown up and defeated; and what is the Matter? — Had we been in our Sences, we ought not to have talk'd so *at first*, and then we should not have been thus disappointed; we should not have believ'd our News-writers, who gave us such wrong Notions of our own Affairs, that we run stark mad, when we found it did not answer their Calculations.

Mad Man. This is all upon me now — Why must Madness be the Occasion? I say, it was not real Madness, it was willful, blind, hair-bain'd ignorance.

Review. You have mended the Matter much, and pray what is this willful Blindness better than Madness?

M. I do not say it is better, you mistake me, I say, it is a great deal worse — As mad as I am, I oftentimes give you Reasons for what I say, and in my lucid Intervals can talk pretty *so so*; but these People are always raving and distracted — But will you know the Difference?

Rev. With all my Heart.

M. Why I am perhaps wrong in my Head, as commonly mad Men are — But the very Souls of these People are mad, they are politickly mad; and they **VILL** be mad; not *Bedlam*, not all your mad Doctors can cure them; there is but one thing in the World can cure them.

Rev. What is that?

M. Nothing but a *French* Government can cure them; the *French* are admirable Doctors, and were they but once on Shoar here, they would cure all our National Frenzies; for my part, if I were a Parliament Man, I'd e'en vote to invite them over.

Rev. God forbid! Bring over the *French*! Man, thou art mad now indeed —

M. Not at all; these People want it, the Nation seems to want it; such a Calenture is got into their Blood, that nothing but *French* Phlebotomy can help them, and I am for the Spanish Proverb — *The Cure must be wrought, tho' the D — be the Doctor.*

Rev. No, no, these are wild Extremes, the *French* cannot come hither to cure these mad Men, but they will undo and ruin all those who run not with them into the same Lunacies; we must therefore see, if we can cure them without such a fatal Remedy as that.

M. I know no Way to cure Men willfully given up to Madness, to Stupidity, eternally deluding themselves, and pleas'd with them that delude them. It was not long since we had it in Print, that the Mareschal *Boufflers* offered to capitulate for the Town of *Lille*, but that Prince *Eugene* would not hear of any Capitulation, but what should include the Citadel — I do not remember which of your daily Deluders it was that forged this Story; but if you were not a People that low'd to be deluded and imposed upon, you would shew your Resentment at such horrid impositions. How often were we told, such a Cover'd Way, such a Salient Angle, such a Traverse, and then nothing remain'd but the general Storm; yet after all these we had a Hornwork to attack, then a Tenaile, then a Ravelin; the Tenaile was taken Sword in hand, and yet we had ten Days Work about that Tenaile, after our Prints gave that Account; then Traverses behind that Tenaile, then a Ravelin behind that — And still this general Storm was not come —

Rev. Well, and all this you tell of Ravelins and Tenailes, was nothing but what they ought to have expected in a Town compleatly fortify'd as this was, perhaps to as much Perfection as any in the World.

M. Right, I say, they ought to have expected it — They ought to have look'd for it before they began the Work.

Rev. No doubt they did — But the grand Delusion WE complain of is our drinking in these Shams at first, believing these wild Delusions at first, and then when our Disappointment comes, we are raving at Generals, at Engineers, at Measures, at Councils,

Councils, and at every thing. The Author of the Post-Man gives you a very good Story of the former Siege of *Lille*, when the French took it—When it had no Fortifications like what it had now, and yet how it deceiv'd the great *Turenne*, and the best Engineer that ever Europe had, I mean Mons. *Vauban*, and how they were maltreated and insulted upon their Want of Conduct; that Author modestly leaves you to make Reflections upon the Story your selves, and indeed you may well do it; *Turenne* and

Vauban, without any Reflection upon others, were as great Men as any these Ages have produced—And all their Conduct could not make *Lille* surrender so soon as they expected, and the Error only lies in expecting, &c. This Age has expected all along without Ground, and being disappointed they complain without Reason.

M. But O the Engineers!

Rev. Well, what of the Engineers?

M. Have Patience, and you shall have a heavy Charge against them in your next.

MISCELLANEA.

IN Prosecuting of the Affair of Persecution in Scotland, I am come to the second Head, Viz. The Queen's Letter to the Privy-Council of Scotland, from whence the Gentlemen we speak of have, Misconstruing the true Intent and Meaning of the said Letter, taken Encouragement to erect Jacobite Assemblies, the crushing and suppressing of which is now pretended to be call'd Persecution in Eng'land, and the Dissenters reproach'd with it—And in the Process of this, I shall give you a brief Account of the Steps taken by the Non-jurant Clergy upon this Letter.

Her Majesty's most Gracious Letter to the Privy Council of Scotland.

ANNE R.

R ight Trusty and Right well Beloved Cousin and Counsellor, Right Trusty and Intirely Beloved Cousins and Counsellors, Right Trusty and right well Beloved Cousins and Counsellors, Right Trusty and well Beloved Cousins and Counsellors, Right Trusty and well Beloved Counsellors, and Trusty and well Beloved Counsellors, We greet you well. Having by our Royal Commission of this Date, Established you to be our Privy Council in our ancient Kingdom of Scotland, in an intire Confidence of your Prudence, Experience and Loyalty, and especially of your Firmness to the Reformed Protestant Religion. We do in the first place, recommend to your Care, the

Church now established by Law, in its superior and inferior Judicatures, such as Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods, and General Assemblies; as also, in the Exercise of their Holy Functions; and in what concerns their Persons and Benefices. We are inform'd, that there are many Dissenters within that Kingdom, who, albeit they differ from the Established Church in Opinion as to Church-Government and Form, yet are of the Reformed Protestant Religion, some of which are in Possession of Benefices, and others exercise their Worship in Meeting-Houses. It is our Royal Pleasure, that they should be directed to live suitably to the Reformed Religion which they profess, submissively to our Laws, decently and regularly with Relation to the Church Established by Law, as good Christians and Subjects: And in so Doing, that they be protected in the peaceable Exercise of their Religion, and in their Persons and Estates, according to the Laws of the Kingdom: And We recommend to the Clergy of the Established Discipline, their living in Brotherly Love and Communion with such Dissenters. In the next place, We recommend to you, the Protection of all our Civil Judicatures, and the Execution of our Laws, for the Good of our People: and that you direct our Sheriffs and Justices of the Peace, to a diligent Execution of the Laws, in so far as is committed to them. And in the third place, The Security and Peace of the Kingdom; and for this end, that you will take special Inspection of the Diligences done by our High-Land Commissions.